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Sen. Kuipers hails compromise on rigorous graduation requirements

LANSING — Senate Education Committee Chairman Wayne Kuipers today praised the deal reached between the state House and Senate over statewide high school graduation requirements.

“This plan makes our state a national leader in ensuring young people graduate with the skills they need to succeed in today’s workforce,” said Kuipers, R-Holland. “Michigan has for too long lagged behind other states in what’s expected of high school graduates.”

Lawmakers approved the compromise graduation requirements after the chambers passed slightly different versions of the proposal first put forward by the State Board of Education and the state superintendent. Both chambers are expected to vote on the plan soon.

Under the plan approved today, students would have to take certain number of years, or equivalent credit, in various topics:

- English — four years.
- Math — four years.
 - Algebra II would have to be taken, except some students could opt out and take a course that goes over the material more slowly. Math credit also could be integrated into career and technical classes.
- Social studies — three years.
- Science — three years.
- Foreign language — 2 years taken anytime from kindergarten onward.
- Physical education/health — 1 credit.
- Arts — 1 credit.
- Online experience — 1 course.

The requirement would go into effect for the class of 2011.

Existing state law requires just a half-year of civics class before high school students can graduate.

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